

REMARKS

1 The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being
unpatentable over Smith in view of Davey. The Examiner concedes that Smith does not
expressly disclose a wireless RUI comprising a handheld display and keypad. The
5 Examiner contends that Davey teaches such a structure. The Examiner argues that at
the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary
skill in the art to modify the handheld unit taught by Smith with the remote control
means taught by Davey.

10 Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's contentions. Even though
applicants believe that the claims are allowable as written, applicants have amended
the claims to further clarify the present invention and expedite this matter. Independent
claims 1, 3 and 4 have been amended to clarify that the RUI is also for displaying the
status of the irrigation components.

15 With regard to the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection, applicants assert that
there is absolutely no motivation to combine the prior art references in the manner
suggested by the Examiner. Smith teaches a computer system for controlling
agricultural irrigation equipment. The type of equipment disclosed in Smith is center
pivot irrigation systems and elevated boom-type irrigation systems. Smith specifically
20 teaches a central computer 25 for controlling a plurality of satellite controllers which are
located within the agricultural field. The central computer is coupled to the satellite
controllers via a communication bus, which is described as being implemented with
twisted pair wire, radio modems or analog telephone modems. Smith does not teach or
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1 otherwise assert that the central computer is a handheld device. However, Smith
teaches that when the central computer is down or where the communication bus is
disrupted, a handheld remote device can be used to communicate with the satellite
controllers by directly coupling the remote unit to a node located within the field. The
5 node is comprised of two different sensors coupled to a satellite controller. The
connection between the two sensors is not described as being wireless. As correctly
pointed out by the Examiner, the specification and figures do not reference the remote
device as a handheld display or a keypad.

10 With regard to the Davey invention, Davey teaches a remote actuator for an
individual's yard or a golf course. The Davey device addresses the problems
associated with broken sprinkler heads in a subterranean multi-station sprinkler system.
The Davey remote allows the user to remotely actuate a sprinkler station to test the
same. This eliminates the users need to walk back to a central unit to turn on or off a
15 watering station. Davey does not reference agricultural irrigation equipment or an
agricultural field. Davey is merely concerned with broken sprinkler heads and a
convenient way of testing the same.

20 A person of ordinary skill in the art presented with the problems described in
Smith would not be inclined on any objective basis to consider the remote sprinkler
actuator as described by Davey. Smith is concerned with large-scale agricultural
irrigation of crops. The equipment associated with this type of irrigation includes
expensive center pivot irrigation equipment and complex software programs to help a
farmer get the most yield from a crop. A person of ordinary skill presented with these
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1 problems would not consider Davey who is concerned with subterranean sprinkler
heads and conduits for an individual's yard.

Moreover, even for argument purposes, if the above references were combinable
as the Examiner suggests, the Examiner's cited art still fails to teach all of the limitations
5 of independent claims 1, 3 and 4. Claims 1, 3 and 4 recite a wireless RUI in
combination with irrigation components and a field. The RUI has three functions; (1)
reading the status, (2) controlling, and (3) displaying the status. Neither Smith nor
Davey teach or otherwise suggest a wireless handheld device which performs these
three functions. Contrary to the Examiner's contention, Davey does not teach a
10 wireless handheld device for reading the status and displaying the status. Davey
merely teaches a remote for actuating the sprinkler. In other words, the remote only
functions to turn the sprinkler on and off. Accordingly, applicants believe that claims 1,
3 and 4 are clearly allowable over the Examiner's rejection.

15 With regard to claim 2, claim 2 depends from independent claim 1 and further
recites that the wireless RUI has a capability of reading the status of the irrigation
components and ancillary equipment, and controlling the same from any location in the
field. For the same reasons set forth above in support of independent claims 1, 3 and 4,
20 applicants believe that neither Smith nor Davey teach or otherwise suggest the
limitations of these claims. Furthermore, insofar as claim 2 ultimately depends from
independent claim 1, the same is also thought to be allowable.

1 In light of the above amendments and remarks, applicants assert that the claims
are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and
allowance of the same.

5 No fees or extensions of time are believed to be due in connection with this
amendment; however, please consider this a request for any extension inadvertently
omitted, and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account No. 502093.

Respectfully submitted,




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15 CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that the original of this AMENDMENT for BRUCE KREIKEMEIER,
ET AL., Serial No. 09/778,367, was mailed by first class mail, postage prepaid, to Mail
Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA
22313-1450 on this 26th day of Feb, 2004.

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DENNIS L. THOMTE